



December 20, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid and Senator McConnell:

As the Senate continues its consideration of the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 (HR 1), I urge all Senators, on behalf of the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) more than 1,600 member organizations, to support its swift passage with the emergency transportation funding levels in the Reid substitute amendment. This funding is essential for vital transportation recovery and relief efforts in areas along the East Coast devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

This bill includes federal assistance to address the unprecedented destruction caused to public transportation infrastructure and to reduce the risk of damage from future disasters. Both components are necessary and prudent to restore transportation systems and improve the resilience of these systems for the future. APTA also strongly supports the bill's provisions that give the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) the ability to manage most of the public transportation grants under the newly created public transportation emergency relief program. Since the FTA already works with the affected systems under the existing federal transit program, FTA can best ensure that emergency efforts are carried out quickly and effectively.

As APTA noted in an earlier letter on this effort, Hurricane Sandy inflicted unprecedented damage to essential infrastructure on the East Coast, and little of that transportation system is more essential than public transportation in the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut region. While the recovery efforts of transit agencies have been impressive, much work remains. Congress should move quickly to pass the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act to provide the necessary federal resources to communities still struggling to recover, rebuild, and protect their transportation systems.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Melaniphy  
President & CEO

MPM/tjj

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